# John Riley

## Tim O'Brien

John Riley came from Galway town in the years of the Irish hunger
And he sailed away to America when the country was much younger
Now the place was strange and work was scarce
And all he knew was farming
So he followed his other Irish friends to a job in the US ArmyAdventure calls and some men run, and this is their sad story
How some get drunk on demon rum and some get drunk on gloryNow they marched down Texas way to the banks of the Rio Grande
They built a fort on the banks above to taunt old Santa Anna
They were treated bad and paid worse, and then the fighting started
And the more they fought the less they thought of the damned old US ArmyAdventure calls and some men run, and this is their sad story
How some get drunk on demon rum and some get drunk on gloryNow when the church bells rang on Sunday morn, it set his soul a shiver
He saw the Senoritas washing their hair on the far side of the river
Then John Riley and two hundred more Irish mercenaries
And they cast their lot, right or not, south of the Rio GrandeAdventure calls and some men run, and this is their sad story
How some get drunk on demon rum and some get drunk on gloryHow they fought bravely under the flag of the San Patricios
Till the Yankees soldiers beat them down at the battle of Churubusco
Then fifteen men were whipped like mules
On the cheeks they were hot iron branded
Made to dig the graves of fifty more, who a hanging fate had handedAdventure calls and some men run, and this is their sad story
How some get drunk on demon rum and some get drunk on gloryNow John Riley stands and drinks alone at a bar in Vera Cruz
And he wonders if it matters much if you win or if you lose
"Well, I'm a man who can't go home, I'm a vagabond", says he
"I'm a victim of some wanderlust and divided loyalty"Adventure calls and some men run, and this is their sad story
How some get drunk on demon rum and some get drunk on gloryAdventure calls and some men run, and this is their sad story
How some get drunk on demon rum and some get drunk on glory

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